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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a brief overview of present practices in school-community relations particularly in the South Eastern United States. The belief that the educational establishment had the answers to individual needs has changed into parents demanding input into the educational programs involving their own children. However, the changes thus far are not systematic, but operate within the framework of a status-quo orientation. A review of the social and political forces that generated changes in school-community relations in the South indicates that with respect to the status of student achievement, staffing policies, curriculum development and other parts of the educational process, Southern educators in larger districts are generally attuned to the need for developing and implementing viable school-community relations programs. New methods of distributing educational funds must be devised, however, to stop the fight for survival between competing groups representing the poor and racial/ethnic minorities. One recommendation suggests that for school-community relations programs to be effective in districts of any size, administrators, teachers, classified personnel, students, parents and all people in the community have to need and want to be co-partners in the development, execution and evaluation of educational programs. A systems model for parental and community involvement including these areas is briefly discussed. (Author/AM)

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AN OVERVIEW OF CURRENT PRACTICES IN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE SOUTH

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CONTENTS

		Page
	Acknowledgements	1
	Introduction	2
I.	Challenges in School-Community Relations in General Terms	6
II.	Social and Political Forces that Generated Changes in the South	10
III.	Federally Funded Categorical Programs---- A Re-examination	25
IV.	Recommendations for Attitudinal and Structural Changes for Building Productive School-Community Processes	29
	Notes	34
	Bibliography	36

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Introduction

One of the necessary functions of any person involved in the development,implementation and evaluation of educational programs is to reassess the apparent needs and develop new methods for meeting these needs. This is best accomplished by independent study and observation away from every day tasks. This has been my reason for taking educational leave from the State Department of Education in California,to review the emerging process in school-community relations in the following manner:

1.Review of major writings and studies in the literature.

2.Consultation with professional educators and colleagues in intergroup relation education.

3.Visitations to school districts in Georgia and North Carolina.

4.Meetings with State Department of Education Staffs in Georgia and North Carolina.

5.Informal meetings with interested citizens, teachers,students and chairmen of local citizen's committees concerned with school matters.

There are four(4) major areas that comprise this brief overview of present practices in school-community relations particularly in the South Eastern United States. Those areas are:

1.The Challenges in School-Community Relations in General Terms.

2.Social and Political Forces that generated Changes in School-Community Relations in the South.

3.Federally Funded Categorical Programs---a re-examination.

4.Recommendations for Attitudinal and Structural Changes for Building Productive School-Community Processes.

All the observations and recommendations that follow are based upon the following assumptions which have under-girded my entire approach to the field of school-community relations.

1.that the educational process is conceived and actualized to assist the students who are,in fact,the school's clients.

2.that in order for goals and objectives to be set realistically parents should be involved in the system.

3.that citizens become advised of the needs and challenges facing the school and the community it serves only when school staffs share data,reports and evaluations with them.

4.in order for effective programs to be actualized it is necessary for the community to understand the challenges and constraints under which school administrative and teaching staffs operate.

5.conversely,the educational staffs should be attuned to the problems and challenges facing parents and children in their home environments in order to effectively initate programs.

6.that it is encumbent on educators to develop viable mechanisms that will allow and encourage citizens to participate in developing,implementing and evaluating educational programs.

7.that when advisory or ad hoc committees are utilized in development of programs they should be representative

of the community,have lay-leadership and function in a task oriented manner.[1]

If the above assumptions have validity then it is incumbent upon educators to institute a bridge between the formalized structure of the school and the community it serves. There are many variables that enter into the creation of a mechanism that will assure positive outcomes from citizen participation. In most urban communities the growth of racial and ethnic minorities in the total population leads to a general over-representation of the minorities in student populations in relation to the size of the total community. This is brought about by a declining birth rate in the middle class and affluent members in the community. Whereas,minority families are of larger size,therefore,the impact is felt at the local school level.

Some of the conclusions reached were:

1.that the most effective programs in the field of school-community relations are those which consistantly utilize citizens in the formalization and implementation of the program.

2.that the goals and objectives are in great measure uniform in school districts through out the nation in basic principal. Variations are present to meet regional needs.

3.that in the South Eastern section of the country aspirations of teachers,students and parents are present but in not as a compelling form as in other areas of the country.

4.behaviors in interpersonal and intergroup relations are discernibly different---people are not as assertive in demonstrating their desires and needs(however noticable change is evident in larger Metropolitan areas).

5.that there is an apparent need for educators in different areas of the country to develop more effective communication skills so that positive practices can be shared.[2]

I. THE CHALLENGES IN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN GENERAL TERMS.

Since the Supreme Court decision in Brown versus Board of Education in 1954, there has been an increased awareness of parents in the fate of their children in school. This has taken the form of special interest groups, special emphasis on needs of racial and ethnic minorities, black, hispanics, and Indian and other ethnic groups in our society who have felt affronted by the system's lack of response to the specific needs of their children. Many times there has been a confrontation between concerned groups and the Board of Education and/or Administrators.

There has also been a correlative new awareness on the part of administrators and State and Federal officials that the general public has to be involved to a greater degree in the planning for, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs. For years, individuals have been conditioned to think of the educational establishment as having the answers to their needs; however, this has changed in that parents are demanding particular input into the educational programs as it involves their own children. Parents are also assisting in implementing and monitoring those programs.[1]

This thrust has also taken the form of legislation both State and Federal which is reflected in ESAA programs, Early Childhood Education programs, multicultural programs, special education programs, and all other categorical aid programs having a requirement for an advisory committee to assist in

the development and implementation of the particular activity. There have been different gradations of respect for,and involvement of advisory committees generally based upon their effective organization and function.

As the educational system reflected the growth in student population of the war boom,it became apparent to some of the leading thinkers in this area that this unrestrained growth correlated with larger urban ghettoes that mired whole generations in the cycle of poverty would in fact generate an under class both economic and educationally. This is to say that although David Reisman,Mario Fantini, and Herbert Cole and others were sympathetic to the needs of the poor and dispossesed they were also aware and forecast in many of their writings the total lack of response of the educational establishment to the discrete needs of the poor. They were labeled disadvantaged youth,but I would rather refer to them as those students with untapped potential who were labeled nonachievers because it best met Societies need to maintain an uneducated economic underclass.[2]

Although Federal Legislation requires citizen participation in categorical aid programs and there is a greater involvement by parents in school matters today the changes seen thus far are not systemic. The larger educational establishment in a pro-forma way,still operates within the framework of a status-quo orientation. Marilyn Gittell and Allen G. Hivesi stated a compelling concept in the following terms and were predictive of things to come:

"The lack of innovation in city school systems,except as periodically stimulated by outside findings,is indicative of this status-quo orientation. Over the last 60 years,city school

systems have experienced a high degree of professionalization combined with extensive centralization of the educational bureaucracy. In every large city, an inbred bureaucratic supervisory staff sits at Headquarters offices holding a tight rein on educational policy. Their vested interests are clear; any major shift in educational policy might well challenge their control of the system. Perhaps the only new agent to enter the domain of school affairs in recent years is the Teacher Organization or union. Unfortunately, these groups have concentrated their attention on salary and related issues; on all other questions, they have supported establishment policies. Additionally, we have seen the abdication of responsibility for education by civic groups, businessmen, labor unions, and parents. The result is a closed political system, which, if measured against our idealogical commitments to public participation, fall far short of any standard for a pluralistic society".[3]

Both Gittell and Fantini amongst many others have highlighted the inherent weaknesses in the educational establishment in dealing with community concerns and control. They have also by their insightful analysis issued a strong challenge to all participants in the educational arena to reassess educational objectives by a process of reawakening and utilizing public interest. This would in fact allow each group, that is, teachers, administrators, parents, students, and other concerned citizens to become adjuncts to decision making and policy formation through the means of joint efforts with educational leaders.

Thus, the challenge facing public education in the United States today is continuing those operative models that have effectively brought parents, students, teachers and other interested

citizens into a more dominant role in effectuating changes in the educational process and initating educational reform. Where reform has taken place attitudes and behaviors were dealt with in the process of change. In those public institutions that have not as yet met the challenge in meeting the needs of the communities they serve,it will be necessary for citizens to effectively modify current practices. They may utilize new strategies adopting "behavior modification principles"for school staffs by ascertaining what modes of positive reinforcement the educators require that citizens may provide as a trade off for meeting their needs and those of their children.

In past years those of us who have worked in this educational area have shied away from this process although we in fact subscribe to it in our own lives by responding to more status in our jobs,higher salaries,and other emoluments. Now we are faced with an issue that needs the same utilization in practice that behaviorists have utilized dealing with students,factory workers,support staff and other persons in the work force.

The answer is not to suggest that we submerge our humanism for short term goals in behaviorist terms,rather I am suggesting that parents and citizens generally will need to utilize many of the same conditioners to meet their needs as society,in fact,places upon them to meet it's demands. Some examples of societal positive reinforcement;if you pay your taxes on time,and have one coming,you get your refund early,or you do your job well and you receive a merit increase,or you produce adequately over a period of years and you get preferential treatment on the vacation list. If these modes of operant conditioning are so widely used in society and spur us onto achievement,why can they not be used for the goals of educational achievement and reform? [4]

II. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FORCES THAT GENERATED CHANGES IN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN THE SOUTH

As a practitioner in the area of school-community relations and other related intergroup relations problems in the State of California,I have been able to relate the operational procedures which have emerged in the last decade to specific problem areas in California School Districts which varied in size from unitary elementary school districts to larger urban school districts. Since the field of school-community relations is not the prerogative of one region of the country solely,I was impelled to study,observe and experience the approaches and modes of implementing the process within the framework of the Southern socio-political dynamic. In order for a better understanding of varied regional approaches it is essential that each professional practitioner must of necessity break out of his insular uni-dimensional preconception and practice relative to his role in the school district or agency in which he serves. I refer specifically to the specialist or consultant,whatever,his title may be,who views school-community relations in either a western,eastern,mid-western or southern context solely. It is important for the professional to expose himself to new experiences and different modes of operation that are operative in other sections of the country.[1]

As a person with familial and educational roots in the west, one of the initial challenges was putting aside preconceptions, pre-judgements and inner emotional feelings,with respect to the South as a distinctly different region both culturally and in

all aspects of life. The persons I interacted with,both professional and nonprofessional,of higher economic or lower economic status or persons representive of all age groups,I found that basically,life focuses on the same needs and aspirations as anywhere else. However,behaviors of both Black and White,Gentile and Jew,rich and poor,reflect a more controlled manner of expressing desires and feelings,such as: affection and anger. The climate at work,in schools,in places of worship,and even in supermarkets and large shopping centers, is more restrained,respectful and yielding a great degree to acknowledged authority.[2] However,particularly in the Metropolitan Atlanta area,which has a reputation for graciousness and friendliness,this mood dissipates quite readily the minute Atlantans get behind the wheel of their cars. Daily one can see a lack of respect,concern and yes,even safety of others highlighted by erratic driving behaviors. This,in great measure,apparently puts people in all age groups in a constant turmoil between reserve and cordiality when meeting and talking to one another,and complete disregard of each other's rights and feelings when anonymity prevails.[3]

This is the general tone observed in recent travel through the south east,however,in recent weeks in the city of Atlanta,Georgia the calm has been broken by major confrontations between the Mayor of the city and a member of his staff in a high level position who was removed from the administration after a tumultuous tirade played out before the entire community in the news media. More recently,the garbage workers,members of AFSCME,have struck the city,tying up public services,dominating the front pages of the morning and evening newspapers and a

large segement of evening TV news. Most recently,a violent confrontation between strikers and police took place at an aborted sit-in in the mayor's office.

I make reference to this atypical behavior to highlight the fact that the south indeed is in a process of change and such actions,without being judgemental about the reasons for the action taken,have a profound effect upon the total community--including school administrators,teachers,students and parents. Because of this evidence of militantcy by government workers it becomes apparent that the consciousness of other groups that feel unrepresented and inadequately compensated,or in other ways slighted,will become more aware and demanding.

In the Southern sector where I have visited and observed school practices in the Atlanta City School System and County Systems including Fulton,DeKalb and Cobb it was evident that there were varied degrees of citizen involvement in matters relating to school programs. The Atlanta School System reflects in its mode of operation a tightly knit control of administrative and teaching staffs by the Board of Education which not only sets policy for the district but inhibits active participation of citizens in school matters. The Board,in this large urban district,assumes a stance of final arbiter of community concerns. For this reason a viable program of wide citizen participation is impossible in spite of the creation of a community service division and a Superintendent who favors community participation.[4]

The General Assistance Center funded through Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act which services the entire State

of Georgia,is housed in the College of Education at the University of Georgia in Athens. This center for educational Improvement is directed by Dr. Morrill M. Hall. Other members of the Staff are: Dr. Norman Moyl,Assistant Director,and Project Coordinators in the following areas:Staff training, Curriculum development,Needs assessment,Community relations, Title IX and Administrative modification. In my discussion with Dr. Hall at the Center for Educational Improvement he advised me that 187 out of the total of 188 districts in the State of Georgia are fully desegregated. There were several groups of court ordered districts,81 districts were ordered to desegregate under a single court order whereas,about 30 other districts in the State had individual litigation and subsequent court orders. This sweeping mandate by Federal and local courts in many instances caused evident initial tensions and reactions in the various communities. However, in the year 1977,it is fair to say that Georgia students and parents are accepting the reality of desegregated schools in a constructive way. Dr. Hall shared with me one case in point;in a small southern district with just 3 schools,one school site houses students grades 1-5,the second grades 6-8,and the third 9-12. All schools,therefore,are totally desegregated and the parents and students are taking a new interest in their education. The only problems of extensive segregation and resegregation are in the urban districts, mainly in Atlanta,which is predominantly Black and is currently under the cloud of a court suit.[5]

In some areas of the state there are continuing community problems which require consultative services,however,the Center serves school districts in the entire State of Georgia only

at their request and according to Dr. Hall when school district policies are criticized by outside forces the Center acts as a buffer for the district so charged.

The Georgia State Department of Education has its services relating to equality of educational opportunity housed under the local systems support division and more specifically the administrative section. In meeting with Gene Aikins,Administrator,and Wilson M. Harry,Coordinator,Federal Technical Assistance Programs,it became apparent that the thrust in this unit is mainly providing technical assistance to school districts in the State for meeting the requirements of Georgia Legislation relating to adequate programs in education. Thus,we find,that school-community relations as generally perceived and understood,is not dealt with extensively at the state level. In spite of the lack of a major thrust in intergroup or community relations aspects of education,the Department has completed an exhaustive effort in compiling and collating significant data in the areas of fiscal,school plant,and racial and ethnic breadkown of student populations.

The Georgia State Department of Education played a major role in the development of the Report of the Recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Education completed in 1976. In the report the areas of School Advisory Committees,Community Education and Community Volunteers are included as necessary functions for local school agencies. In the report State Superintendent of Schools,Jack P. Nix,is reported to have made the following remarks in a speech to Superintendent's and Principal's at Jekyll Island in July 1975:

"In the past few months I have come more and more to the realization that the day of reckoning for public education is upon us---unless we are at the pinnacle of our success, unless we have achieved everything we had set out to achieve through the educational system,it is time to stop and assess where we are. Not only must we be willing to look at ourselves,we must welcome others who would examine schools and their activities closely. There is an old saying that war is much too serious a thing to be left to military men. Well, education is too serious a thing to be left entirely to educators. Community and parental involvement in education can turn a whole school around."

The staff at the State Department was receptive to inquiries and this appears to differ in practice from the apparent defensiveness which still exists in the field. There is in districts throughout the state,both local and county wide,an obvious hesitancy to share ideas,information and perceptions,and a desire to keep things "close to one's vest".[6]

In a visit to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district I met with Ms. Shirley A Johnson,Community Relations Specialist, in the Communication Service Division and Dr. James Mikkelson, Human Relations Specialist in the Human Resources Division to review the policy organization and implementation of school-community relations in the district. In 1965 Black plaintiffs initated litigation that became a landmark Supreme Court decision--Swann Vs. Charlotte-Mecklenburg which in fact changed the whole course of desegregation throughout the United States. The court in that case ordered the district to abandon its dual system and by affirmative action create a unitary system.

Initially,in Charlotte the reaction was extremely volatile against the court order. To quote Mr. John Egerton,who stated in the publication "School Desegregation:A report card from the South"--"Over the next 4 years little changed in the schools or in the courts. Finally,in April 1969,McMillan(Judge)issued his first decision in the case. The schools,he found,were deliberately and overwhelmingly segregated,in violation of the law and the Constitution. He told the school board it had an "affirmative duty" to correct the situation.

In the atmosphere of a building national resistance to school busing,the order of the court rocked Charlotte on its heels,and reaction was swift. The decision was denounced by the Board Chairman,Attorney,William E. Poe,and by numerous local organizations,including the Classroom Teachers Association. A large group of white citizens formed a protest organization, The Concerned Parents Association(CPA). Sign carrying pickets gathered at the U.S. post office and courthouse,and on the lawn of McMillan's home. Ministers assailed school busing from the pulpit,the Charlotte NEWS condemmed the judge--an establishment lawyer in Charlotte before his appointment to the Federal bench in 1968--and 80,000 signatures were accumulated on anti-busing petitions.

Throughout the remainder of 1969 and the first eight months of 1970,the school board was in and out of court pursuing a variety of appeals and delaying tactics,and the community remained in a state of high agitation. The court appointed John A Finger,Jr.,a consultant from Rhode Island,to draw up a complete desegregation plan,and McMillan ordered the plan implemented in the fall of 1970. Three candidates of the CPA, meanwhile,won election to the school board,and the first year of

large-scale pupil reassignment and busing was marred by boycotts, white flight to private schools,and violence. The law offices of Julius A. Chambers,attorney for the black parents were burned in February 1971,and his father's garage and service station in nearby Mt. Gilead were set afire twice in the six months prior to that. (Earlier,in 1965 Chamber's automobile was dynamited while he was attending a civil rights rally,and bombs were exploded at his home and the homes of three other black leaders in Charlotte). Threats against Judge McMillan became so numerous and so intense that Federal marshals were assigned to protect him".[7]

Since the time of the court order and following it for several years as described by Mr. Egerton,there has been a remarkable change in attitude in both Black and White Communities, administrative staffs,certificated and classified employees and students of both races in the public schools of this largest district in the State of North Carolina. Ms.Johnson shared with me information with respect to the existing advisory committees for State and Federally funded programs,special ad hoc committees,district wide advisory committees to the Superintendent,and school site councils which are actively operating on local school needs concurrent with the thrust of the district wide communities. It is important to note that all committees are representative of the community across race and economic lines.

The district has continued it's open line policy whereby any citizen can call into the communications office and verify reports then current in the community. This plan was initated to forestall the mounting rumors during the early phases of desegregation,however,the response from the community has been so positive that the district continues the practice of respond-

ing to all incoming calls by willingly sharing information with those initiating the inquiries.

While I was present in the district the Board of Education was going through the final phases of selection of their new Superintendent from the two finalists. It was encouraging to note that representative members of the advisory council were included in the screening committees for the top executive position. I had the personal pleasure of meeting with one of the community representatives, Rev. Battle, minister of the Gesthemene AME Zion Church. As a leader of a leading Black congregation it was most helpful to receive his insights and assessment of school-community relations in the school district. The church has received a Federal grant of $170,000 for an enrichment program to assist students who are in attendance in schools in the district. Rev. Battle indicated that the emphasis is on enrichment but that some remediation in Math. and Reading is included in the program.

When I asked Rev. Battle to what he attributed the success in Charlotte schools, he stated:

1. Communication is available with top level people--we have complete access.

2. We have excellent relationships with principals, teachers and counselors at individual school sites.

Another positive program is "Project Aries" (so labeled after the astrological sign of the man that formulated it). The high school students who participated in the program assist junior high school students in tutoring and other activities. The kids went to camp for a whole week and learned and socialized together, and in the words of Dr. Mikkleson: "The kids helped cool things down and also helped in developing student's rights and respons-

ibilities."

From the above one can soon get the impression that Charlotte,North Carolina has come a long way from the day 12 years ago when the lawsuit was first filed. This is summed up very graphically by the judge that issued the order who stated: "With grateful appreciation to all who have made possible this court's graduation from Swann,it is therefore, ordered:

1.that this case be removed from the active docket

2.that the file be closed

this 11th day of July 1975 James B. McMillan,U S District Judge

A review of desegregation process and school-community relations in North Carolina was accomplished by consulting with Dr. Dudley E. Flood,Assistant State Supertintendent for Human Relations and Student Affairs and Mr. Lee Grier,Director of the Division of Human Relations at the State Department of Public Education in Raleigh,North Carolina. The State of North Carolina is divided into 100 counties in which there are 145 school districts. The districts with larger enrollments,as it is true most of the south, are those districts administred by County Boards of Education and Administrative Staffs. According to the actual day to day working relationships between state department personnel and county and local school districts staffs,Dr. Flood indicated that generally the status of school-community relations in the state following desegregation has been a productive emerging process. Although the Charlotte-Mecklenburg district has received the widest publicity and public national acclaim for its transition from a highly volatile and resistant community to one that is supportive of integrated schools-the state leadership concurs in this evaluation.

However, from their perceptions and visitations the Greensboro district has accomplished an outstanding feat in moving from segregation to integration, and citizen resistance, to city wide support of public education. In fact, Dr. Flood indicated during personal conversation that the Greensboro school district in his estimation exemplified the highest degree in desegregation planning and continued efforts in implementation of the plan since it was instituted.[8] Mr. Grier in reviewing the philosophy and functions of the Title IV program in the department referred to the stated objectives as outlined in the grant application. This year's project has the following objectives which are listed in rank order:

1. Title IX
2. Staff training
3. School-community relations
4. Curriculum
5. Minority displacement
6. Coordination of Federal and State concerns
7. Assessment of desegregation
8. New administrative studies
9. Student Faculty assignments

It is important to note that the area of school-community relations moved up in priority 4 steps in one calendar year. This indicates the client districts are requesting services of North Carolina staff persons trained in human relations to assist mainly in meeting Federal requirements for implementation of Title IX, assisting in in-service training of staffs and rendering technical assistance to districts state-wide in meeting problems in the area of school-community relations.

The visitation to this Department in North Carolina reaffirmed this observer's impressions that Southern state agencies and General Assistance Centers were generally receptive and quite willing to share data,their insights on current and past practices,and further in being helpful in a personal way in providing information which assisted me in future planning.

Although personal visitations at the time of writing this brief report were not possible to districts in South Carolina, Tennessee,Florida and Louisiana some of the aforementioned areas were quite responsive in sending to me reports of their human relations or school-community relations programs operating in the agency.

The State Department of Louisiana communicated directly with me and sent me information that thy recently added a professional to their staff who will serve as Coordinator for community education. The Department indicated that later personal consultation may be possible and/or reports would be sent directly to me at the California State Department of Education. The New Orleans public schools also indicated that they were quite willing to share information with respect to their ongoing programs. A partial review of some materials indicated that the city schools were moving ahead in this area. However,not as extensively as the larger systems in North Carolina.

In correspondence and material sent from the Department of Education of South Carolina by E W Nunnery,Director,Office of Technical Assistance/Surveys,the program in the area of Title IV and Title IX assistance was detailed. Reports included:

1.The Office of Technical Assistance of 1976-77 activities and objectives and needs for the operation for the

same office

2.A summary of Federal Aid under the Emergency School Aid act and the office's assistance in developing, implementing and monitoring ESAA Projects.

3.Consultative services in the area of multi-ethnic and multi-cultural educational programs.
Consultants trained local school district personnel to administer and provide multi-ethnic and multi-cultural programs.

4.A publication "Suggestions for Strengthing Advisory Committees".
A video tape presentation was developed along with a booklet entitled "People Power". The booklet and tape assisted school districts with their advisory committees for ESAA and ESEA Title I programs.
It is apparent after reviewing the materials,that the staff of the State Department of Education in South Carolina is sensitive to,and meeting the varied needs,of school districts throughout the state,utilizing the means of personal consultations,preparation of materials, and effecting a leadership role that moves districts along the road to meeting their objectives.

In reference to the Metropolitan Nashville schools the district provided a publication " A Quick Reference for Teachers who care about People:. It stressed the ABC's of communication highlighting words and terms to be avoided and those to be used, and also the inclusion of"the second language of the young people in the Schools",that is,vernacular terms that often times are not understood or misunderstood by teachers. This is just one artifact developed following the general thrust for student and community education after the system was ordered to desegregate in 1971. Included in the publication "School Desegregation: A Report Card from the South" by John Egerton, Mr. Frank Sutherland

of the Nashville Tennessean stated:

"Under the plan approved in 1971 by Judge Morton,no school was supposed to be more than 44 percent black. But when schools opened that fall,so many whites failed to show up that 10 of the schools were majority-black. Today,in the fifth year of the plan,there are 24 schools in which the black enrollment ranges from just over 50 percent to almost 95 percent.

Board Chairman,Dorrier,says,he now believes that judge made a mistake in not including all of the suburban schools in the desegregation plan. "Right now,we think we would improve things if we integrated the suburbs," he says. "We would have to hitch up our britches,but we don't have the nerve or the funds to do it--primarily the nerve. To correct the situation now,we would have to chase the people with buses,rezoning each year".

So it is clearly understood any movement towards bettering school-community relations by school officials in cooperation with the community,in the light of the evident strain of apparent resegregation,attests to the desire and willingness of people in Nashville to continue the quest for equality of educational opportunity.

Although I would have preferred to meet with Administrators, School staffs,students and community persons in all of the afore mentioned school districts and Scate Agencies,time and resources precluded it. However,I believe it is fair to say in summarization,that based upon my individual meetings with many persons involved in education in the South and my study and review of existing programs and references,I feel able to say that,without being judgemental,with respect to the status

of student achievement,staffing policies,curriculum development and other important parts of the educational process, that Southern Educators in larger districts are generally attuned to the need for developing and implementing viable school-community relations programs.

III. FEDERALLY FUNDED CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS--A RE-EXAMINATION

Prior to Federal Aid to education when there were general educational funds administered solely at the discretion of the state,it was evident that the specific needs of poverty stricken children were not being met. Early in the 1960's when Congress enacted ESEA,Title I,there followed a myriad of Federally funded educational programs especially designed for what was termed the "Culturally disadvantaged child". The prescription,in my view,rather than curing the ailment exacerbated the disease. It,in fact,instituted for a non-responsive system where necessary support levels were lacking, a system which institutionalized dependency levels. A whole stratum of poor youth were,and still are,being labeled"dia-advantaged" and because of this labeling an institutionalized syndrome of dependence and failure is reinforced and escape hatches,instead of being wider,are narrowed under the guise of a new "wonder drug" for education"individualization".[1] The whole process has led to a stage where a huge bureaucracy has been built up and accepted as a fact of life,--leadership staffs become enslaved to singular programs,publishers and consultants feed at a trough that appears unending while student achievement lags behind and teachers and parent's frustrations continue to mount,often times evident by outright hostility and violence. We continue to ask the same inadequate questions: Why can't our kids read and write properly? Why is there so much disruption and disrespect in our schools? Why can't we have students reflect the students of my day,30 year's ago? As one can see these questions avoid the central issue. The central issue is that however,wholesome group indentity is

it must not be viewed in a uni-dimensional way. We have continued evidence of fragmentation, in fact, hostility between not only representatives of racial and ethnic groups and the majority group, but between members of the minority groups themselves. We continue to see competitiveness between Black, Hispanic, Indian and Asian groups for limited funds to meet what they consider fruitful goals in light of their groups needs. However important the feeling is on the part of the group leaders the end result of this competitiveness, is a diminution of sensitivity and support by the majority group "which generally control the school board and purse strings for majority goals and purposes." [2]

In the past, and to this day, one of the inhibitors to creating a productive school-community relations program is the practice of focusing on the need, aspirations or demands of one singular group be it students, parents, teachers, administrators, or the "general public". When the community becomes fragmented or isolated and organized into competing groups, they vie for control of the educational establishment by superimposing their own singular demands upon the system. A sterile, one track, resistant, educational process ensues which in fact, shortchanges those persons and groups that did not affect the controlling power. This happens to be proved not only from the literature which I refer to from time to time, but has also been a part of my personal experience as observer, consultant and/or active participant in the emerging process of school-community relations in the last 20 years.

One of the foremost architects of practicable, and operational reforms in educational practice concerned with

enlarging the active participation of [illegible] parents, [illegible] and students is Mario Fantini. He clearly enunciated the new thrust of parents and student involvement in a study undertaken for the NEA. Fantini in his study stated: "The 60's saw the emergence of the three parties closest to the learning front---students,parents and teachers. The 70's will doubtless see parents and teachers--the major influences of educational direction. These three parties have risen to power through dissent--students through increased activism,parents through loss of confidence and school boycotts,teachers through militancy (eg. strikes).

Making democracy work is never easy,and as we listen to the dissent we can hear quite clearly the call for increased participation. Can we harness the constructive energies of the parties of interest toward the common problem of school reform? Can we really practice participatory democracy? Or shall we enter the realm of confrontation politics of open conflict between and among the major publics of our urban schools? The choice is clearly ours."

In California,as an intergroup relations consultant to numerous school districts in assisting them to develop and implement educational programs with the assistance of advisory committees or councils,I found in practice that,in fact, many of the persons were committed to educational equity and survival of their children and members of their own ethnic group. Many times they have become emeshed in their own programatic and group needs and in so doing have demanded monies for their program at the expense of outlays to other deserving groups. This proliferation of interest groups,

each demanding that its own program be funded,whether or not it eliminates the other group's program creates a divisive force in the educational establishment that can only lead to more chaos and disarray.[3]

The only chance from my perception to halt this competitiveness and disarray is to initate a re-examination of the whole process of funding. It is apparent to me after viewing majority-minority confrontations and the continued fight for survival between competing groups representing the poor and racial and ethnic minorities that some new methods of distributing the funds for education must be devised.

It is hoped that any new thrust toward redesign of the funding process for educational programs include the input of the communities being served,and this can best be accomplished through the mechanism of truly representative citizen groups actively participating in formulating school policy.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ATTITUDINAL AND STRUCTURAL CHANGES FOR BUILDING PRODUCTIVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PROCESSES.

Building upon 20 years of experience, thinking, working, living and dreaming in the field of intergroup relations, human relations, community relations, school-community relations, interpersonal relations, group dynamics including T groups, marathon groups and just plain rap sessions, out of this conglomerate of every level of associational life I come to the following conclusions and recommendations based upon this experience:

1. For school-community relations programs to be effective in districts of any size, administrators, teachers, classified personnel, students, parents and all people in the community have to need and want to be co-partners in the development, execution and evaluation of educational programs.

2. In order for people to want the best for their children in the educational arena, they must provide the environment at home conducive to learning.
I am not equating this requirement with status, wealth or material artifacts, what I mean, is that all elements in the educational process have responsibilities and this includes parents and students to create a learning environment.

3. That teaching staffs MUST meet the needs of the students, taking into account racial, religious, ethnic and economic backgrounds of the child and its community.
Only by understanding and acting creatively on that understanding in a non-patronizing yet, a conciliatory way, can teachers reach the children.

4.Where teachers,administrators,children and parents are products of violent environments--the cycle must be broken. Humanism must replace violence both physical and mental,verbal and non-verbal. This does not mean an abdication of discipline or responsibilities nor that the teacher does not set limits, it does mean however,that a new game plan is instituted whereby,if you want to eat the cake with the good frosting on it, you know what the ingredients are and you help in the baking. You can't stamp on the floor around the oven and expect the cake to rise. We must get out of the syndrome and realize that sticks and stones not only break your bones but break your spirit too.

Thus,we see that a new undergirding of humanistic practices would in fact,of necessity,lead to a total restructuring of the administrative methods to bring the schools and the community they serve together as architects of the total educational program. On balance,it is far more practicable for a school system to have a well organized,lean,effective,functioning school-community relations unit that has the trust and support of all parties rather than an unwieldy super structure with bureau's,administrators,specialists,and other professionals and par-professionals interfacing with each other all over the place with nothing getting accomplished and no real changes being instituted at the school site "where the action is".[1]

It certainly should not be the intent of any one individual or group of individuals to feel that they have the capacity, skill nor the insight to restructure a system as large as the educational system to meet what they conceive to be the answer for correcting any non-productivity in the field of education.

However,it seems to this practitioner that the time has come for major institutional redesign with the understanding that structural changes alone do not bring change,but new directions paired with new responsibilities for all affected parties in the educational process will be our only chance to realize positive educational outcomes for all students based upon a new spirit of personal accountability.

While working in the area of school-community relations in rendering assistance to California School Districts I developed a systems model for parental and community involvement. The function of the model is to assist school districts of varying sizes to assess their needs in the area of school-community relations and more systemically develop procedures that would enhance the development,implementation and evaluation of the district's educational programs. An inherent concept embodied in the model is the idea that prioritizing the needs of existing interest groups and programs can be regularized through the method of having a core group review the district's needs assessment and determine goals and objectives for community participation and involvement.

The systems model approach to community involvement includes 15 steps to be undertaken in 4 major areas:

1.Assessment of needs

2.Development of procedures

3.Implementation of programs

4.Evaluation of program activities

In the area of needs assessment it is imperative that the Board of Education authorize the administrative staff to undertake a comprehensive assessment. This process should include data collection of racial and ethnic makeup of the community, and an audit of program needs in each school attendance area by

[illegible] with parents and continuing consultation with leaders of existing advisory committees,school staffs, and community organizations for their appraisal of needs and recommendations for change. To complete the assessement process the results of audits in each school attendance area should be recorded for easy reference as the process continues.

The next step in applying the model is development of procedures to effectuate change. This is accomplished by establishing goals and objectives for district wide parent and community involvement. The essence of this new structure is the creation of a core group representative of leaders of existing committees,community organizations,unaffiliated persons,certificated and classified staff,administrators including site Principal's and students to review the district's needs assessment and determine goals and objectives for community participation and involvement.

After goals and objectives have been set by the core group operational guides of proposed activities are developed to meet specific stated objectives. In order to establish a system of coordination the guides should be disseminated to all existing committees. It is imperative that all the activities flowing from the stated objectives are reflected in each school's curriculum. In order to insure the inclusion of ideas from person's not represented on existing committees,the staff should set up a process so that their ideas may be channeled to existing committees. The district core group should undertake a quarterly review and evaluation of activities implemented at each school site. To insure an adequate information base, results of the evaluation of programs in the schools should be disseminated to the entire community through the use of Superintendent's bulletins,newsletters,press releases,radio and TV.

coverage.

Evaluation of program activities on this continuum is necessary for the effective utilization of the model and assurance of reaching the desired results. A formal presentation should be made to the Board of Education regarding the outcomes of parent and community involvement and its effect on school programs at the end of each school year. The final phase of the evaluative process is the convening of the district core group to revise objectives to meet new needs or eliminate areas already accomplished.[2]

The utilization of the model or an adaptation to meet special needs does in fact enhance educational programs and usher in a new sense of accountability. This process in operation regularizes decision making between competing forces and moves the district towards resolving conflictual situations. By enlarging community participation in an organized manner it assists Boards of Education to make more reasoned and expeditious decisions on important educational matters with the concurrent benefit of bringing those forces which normally are openly competitive into a more cooperative stance for the betterment of the entire educational community.

SYSTEM MODEL FOR PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

1-Assess Needs	2-Development of Procedures	3-Implementation of Programs	4-Evaluation of Program Activities
Board of Education authorizes district needs assessment for community involvement. .1 Administrative staff directed to undertake district needs assessment. .2 Collect data regarding racial/ethnic makeup of community. .3 Audit needs in each school attendance area by consulting parents directly for their suggestions. .4 Consult leaders of existing advisory committees, school staff and community organizations for their appraisal of needs and recommendations for change. .5 Record outcomes of 1.3.	2.0 Establish goals and objectives. 2.1 Core group representative of leaders of existing committees, community organizations, unaffiliated community persons, certificated and classified staff, administrators including site principals, and students review district needs assessment and determine goals and objectives for community participation and involvement.	3.0 Establish operational guides of proposed activities to meet objectives for community participation. 3.1 Establish coordinating system to disseminate guides to existing committees. 3.2 Insure that the activities flowing from the stated objectives are reflected in each school's curriculum. 3.3 Staff to set up process to assist community persons not represented on existing committees to channel their ideas to existing committees. 3.4 Quarterly review and evaluation by district core group of results of activities implemented at each school site. 3.5 Dissemination of the results of evaluation of programs in the schools to the entire community through superintendent's bulletins, news letters, press releases, and radio and TV coverage.	4.0 Formal presentation to Board of Education of outcomes of parent and community involvement at end of school year. 4.1 Convening of district core group to revise objectives to meet new needs or eliminate areas already accomplished.

Introduction

1.The stated assumptions are my own based upon study,personal observation and actual practice in the field of school-community relations.

2.The conclusions reached were arrived at after review of all data collected and through review of the notes of personal conversations with persons involved in education in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

Section I

1.In California parents are heavily involved in the implementation of early childhood education programs.

2.This is a personal perception which is purely judgemental on my part after 20 years of professional experience in the field.

3.From Politics of Urban Education. Edited by Marilyn Gittell and Allen G. Hevesi. Frederick Praeger 1969. PP 364-365.

4.It will be important,I believe for both educators and the citizens they serve to realize that operant conditioning is not antithetical to maintaining humanistic values. Of course, people will have to be informed regarding the use of behavior modification techniques.

Section II

1.The reference to the professional in this section and other parts of the paper where the words his or himself appear are not to infer that women are not an important part of the profession and should have open access to it. The author, although reordering his thinking,has not as yet changed his language usage.

2.This observation refers to experiences following conversations with people in Georgia,North Carolina dnd South Carolina.

3.This refers to a daily phenomenon in Atlanta on surface streets as well as the expressways.

4.Observation of Atlanta Board of Education in public session and personal interviews with citizens who have their children in the public schools in Atlanta.

5.Personal meeting with Dr. Morrill H. Hall at The General Assistance Center,University of Georgia. March 1977.

6.In my visitations to various school districts I found that although I was warmly received as an individual,I still was not provided with many of the resources requested.

7.School Desegregation: A report card from the South. By John Egerton. Southern Regional Council PP 15 &16.

8.Personal visitation to State Department of Education in North Carolina,including a meeting with Dr. Dudley Flood and Mr. Lee Grier who direct Human Relations and Intergroup activities in the State Department of Education.

Section III,

1.This conclusion has been reached after active involvement in developing,implementing and monitoring numerous Federally Funded Programs.

2.It has been apparent after years of professional service in the field,that although School Boards are becoming more responsive to the needs of ethnic and racial minorities and poor people generally,that the eruption of obvious discord between minority groups adversely affects the outcome of the decisions made by the School Board,which is generally controlled by the majority group.

3.These statements are a reflection of my own perceptions from the field of school-community relations during my service as Intergroup Relations Consultant in the California State Department of Education. 1966 to the present.

Section IV

1.I have often felt that the public welcomes responsive school-community departments rather than large units that depend upon public relations for their survival and support.

2.The complete systems model for parent and community involvement will be found preceding this section.

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